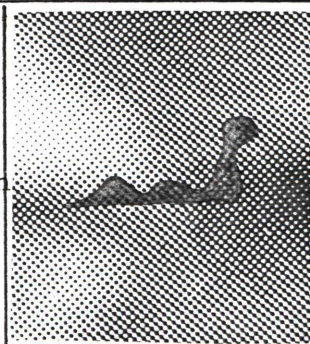




We shall not cease from exploration  
And the end of all our exploring  
Will be to arrive where we started  
And know the place for the first time.

(T S Eliot)

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#### BEHEMOTH:

● Scotland: Another chapter in my search for Nessies ancient history. Half-a dozen newspapers were published in Inverness during the 19th century. Three are indexed in Inverness library. None of them mentions the Loch Ness Monster; they printed sea serpent stories from all over the world but ignore Nessie. A mermaid at Ullapool appeared in the Inverness Journal of 20.I.1832, p.3a, the same paper reported on the Stronsa beast on 27.I.1809, p.3c. The Daedalus serpent was discussed with much irony in the Inverness Courier (IC) of 19.x.1848, p.4f, also IC 9.xi., p.2a; 9.xi., p.4f; 30.xi., p.4f and 21.xii., p.2fg - the first time a sea serpent is mentioned in connection with Inverness comes from that year, the IC of 14.xii.1848 has the following on p.3a: "A Sea-Serpent On A Small Scale.-A monster eel was caught on Friday at Kessock Ferry. It was seen by one of the men swimming slowly in the shallow water at the wooden jetty. A boat-hook was immediately procured, and a lucky blow on the head stunned the monster. It was then transfixed and hauled ashore, when it was found to measure 5 ft in length and 14 inches round the thickest part." Then there is no mention of a monster until the "Scene at Lochend", in the IC, 1.vii.1852, p.3a. Then comes the first article on Scottish loch monsters: Mr M Bankes, in a letter to the Inverness Advertiser, published 3.I.1854, p.5e, he asks for information about "what I consider a very remarkable fact in natural history, viz., the existence of large whales in our Highland lochs. They have been called, in Gaelic, Muc Shealchaig, and they have been repeatedly seen in Loch Bhadluachraich, by Udrigle, and also in Lochnasealg in Ross-shire". On March 14, 1854, p.6c, the IA has another letter by Bankes. He complains that he got not even one letter, then goes on to say that the "big fish" were recently seen in Loch Bad-a-Luachrach. He then lists three sea serpent sightings from Scotland and says that the loch fish are definitely another species, his own idea is that they are European catfish. Then again two sea serpents from Inverness-shire in the IC: on 29.viii.1872, p.5cd, Twopenny on his Kyle observation, on 20.xi.1873, p.6f and 27.xi., p.6cd, on the Golspie sea serpent - the witnesses say they saw only a sandbank that appeared alive with seaweed washed over it by the tide! Then I checked out the reference 14.ix.1884, in the IC, as mentioned by Oudemans, but the IC was not published on that day. Next, a report in the IC, 17.viii.1906, p.6f, on a sea serpent observed in Loch Broom, Ullapool, which turned out to be a basking shark. Then I checked the Northern Chronicle (1.iii.1934) reference about two porpoises having been seen off Foyers either in 1915 or 16. I searched only 1915, and found the following in the IC, 17.viii.1915, p.6f: "An Unusual Visitor.- A bottle-nosed whale, about 12 ft in length, was killed in the River Ness at Thornbush last week." Thornbush is still in the tidal zone of the River, between Inverness and the sea, so this is not really a confirmation. Lastly, the IC 17.viii.1926, p.5a has a jokular report about a "huge pike" that swallowed a rat at Fort Augustus, then, with the IC report of 29.viii.1930, p.5f on the Milne sighting, the modern era begins. There is one report more that I have found, a 1898 sighting of Morag: The Highland News, 14.iv.1917, p.5b, had an article on "Traditional Monsters of the West". It lists several famous goblins, then: "A monster is still located in Loch Morar. Some places are pointed out where it feeds; the marks of its feet are found at Camus-nam Bràthan; traces of it exist at Ruidh nan Deorcag and Coll-nam-muc. This Loch Morar creature gets from the natives the name 'Morag'. It appears only when one of the natives of the place die ('aon de dhùthchas an aite'). The last time it was seen was in 1898, when Aonghas an Traigh died. 'Morag' is seen

in daylight. As its appearance foretells a death, it is called 'Morag Dhubh'; 'Morag Odhar'." Other creatures mentioned are the one-legged humanoid of Glen Etive, and the ptrodactyl-like Loch Hourm monster. So this more has more in common with goblins than sea serpents. It now is quite clear that there were no monsters in Loch Ness prior to 1930, or the Inverness papers would have mentioned it. Also, the long-necked sea creature is a modern myth, earlier loch monsters were goblins, mermaids or big fish.

● Loch Ness: On September 1, 1988, skipper John Galbraith, and his crewmen Duncan Dunlop and Ian MacAulay, in their trawler Sapphire, were in Foyers Bay when their sonar picked up a "red blob" at a depth of 700 ft. Galbraith: "This was a large, moving, apparently living mass about 100 feet in length. It's the sort of echo you would get from a densely-packed shoal of fish. But there are certainly no shoals of anything in the fresh water of the loch." Adrian Shine: "This is very interesting. It is a large mass of something and it is the best echo we have had from the loch bottom in years of research." (Scottish Daily Record, 2.ix.88, p.23) This was also mentioned in the IC, 2. ix., p.7e. - In the Inverness Tourist Office I saw a note asking for volunteer "Nessie spotters" to participate in a watch, "hard work, no pay, good mates". It seems some locals still continue with the search. - Eastenders star Linda Davidson visited Inverness in September. She also visited Loch Ness: "There was one disappointment for her. She expected Loch Ness to look mysterious and mist covered and had hoped for a sighting of Nessie." (Press and Journal, 6.ix.88, p.1) This is another of the myths the Nessie fans created: the lonely loch in a desert-like, provincial Highland. Dr Gordon R Williamson, in the "Scientific Report of the Whale Research Institute" (No. 39, March 1988: 151 - 157, Tokyo, Japan) reports on "Seals in Loch Ness". This is a very important paper. Williamson shows that seals visit Loch Ness at the rate of one each two years. I had several seal sightings from 1934, but didn't know how common seals were. Williamson quotes a sighting from the River Oich before 1895, the seal that was in the loch from 16.xi. 1984 until it was shot on 11.vi. 1985, which was observed some 60 times! From 1972 - 80, there were 4 seals in the loch, one in 1981, from iv to viii, and in x 1985, two seals were seen at Dochfour and off Foyers, and photographed by John Bailey. Other vague sightings are mentioned. He concludes that a jumping seal could easily be mistaken for a monster, and I agree. With the possibility of small whales in the loch, and the certainty that seals are regular visitors, I feel it is possible to explain all reports of Nessie that cannot be explained as hoaxes, otters, deers and waves. Williamson was angrily refuted by the editor of the Scots Magazine, in the ix.1988 issue. - Loch Ness bibliography: the IC on "Deepscan": 9.x.87, p.7d, 13.x., p.7a & c, 16.x., p.7a. The dispute between the Loch Ness Lodge and the Drumnadrochit about who owns the monster: IC 3.xi.87, p.7e.

● Big fish: 1) According to the news agency dpa, a 2.36m catfish was caught in the Kablower Fließ, in Potsdam district, GDR, after a hard two-hour long struggle by fishermen. It had a weight of 74kg, and was an estimated 25 years old. It fed on small ducks, swans and water hens, and had been quite a nuisance to local fishermen. (FAZ, 17.viii., p.7a; SZ 17.viii., p.36f; Rhein Zeitung, 17. viii., p.4de, Rhp, 17.viii.) 2) The Spanish news magazine "Cambio 16", 15.viii., pp.26/27, has a story about the "monstruo de 'Caspé Lake'". This is the Mequinenza Reservoir in the province of Zaragoza. A German, George Wall, came to the reservoir 10 years ago, introduced catfish (which Cambio 16 calls "giant fish, similar to sharks") and promoted 'Lake Caspé', as he calls it, as the home of monsters. He had success: fishermen and anglers from all over Europe, some even from NATO bases in Turkey, come to fish for "Monsters".

● Living Dinosaur: The Saudi Gazette (20.viii., p.13abc) has a story by Scott Doggett on Mackals new expedition to Namibia, to search for pterodactyls and white bushmen in the mountains there. He will also be looking for giant lizards and monster snakes.

● Bibliography: Chinese Lake monster (cf. Bilk 24): SWF 3,9. viii, 1855 pm. Paluxy prints, and Kubans discovery, P.M., Sept 88, p.11. The Loch na Beiste monster, and Bankes investigation: Scots Magazine, sept 87, and Nov 87, p. 212: Steuart Campbell's idea that, once again, it was an otter. Fortean Times 50: p.35, Deepscan; p.6: Dinsdale; p.15: Lake Washington sturgeon; p.70:



review of Mackal. traditional dragon fight in Furth, W. Germany, on the anniversary of a legendary slaughter: Rhein Zeitung, 13.viii,p.4. J Dymond dives to bottom of 435m-deep Crater Lake, Oregon, in a mini-sub. (Arab News,7.viii p.12e, Saudi Gazette 7.viii,p.4b) Crater Lake has a monster, cf. Coleman's list in Curious Encounters. Sth American leguan caught at Kassel, W Germany, SZ 20.viii,p.10c.

#### ISIS:

● Bibliography: I've seen a recent novel by a Mr Edmonds: The Silkie, which has a "scientific appendix" on merman and claims that one was caught and investigated at Cape Cod, Mass. Could anyone send me a copy? - The SZ,24.viii, p.36ah, reports on Copenhagen's little mermaid statue. - In Kurt Vonnegut: Galapagos (Delacorte Press, New York 1985) humanity has evolved into instinct driven, seal-like creatures. - Carolinas lizard man was also mentioned in the BFBS radio news, Germany, in vii or viii. They said the witnesses were probably high on LSD! Geo Spezial: Mexico (April 1986,p.101) has a picture by Mexican artist Francisco Toledo, painted in 1976, showing an "iguana woman". According to Ripley's "Believe it or not" (Pocket Books, New York 1945,p. 123/24) claims a "crab-toed" tribe lives "in the western part of New York State". There is also a skin disease which turns the skin into a horny, scale-like substance (see Fortean Times 46). A sensationalist account about a family suffering from this disease, called "the snake boys" was in the News of the World's "Sunday" colour magazine, 3. iv 88,p.30/31. A martian with blue scales was observed at Cordoba, Argentina, in 1968 (Irish Times, 17.viii 1968,p.1f). The Irish Press (19.viii 1962,p.6def) mentions a "crocodile man" from Nyasaland, the local variation of the were wolf theme.

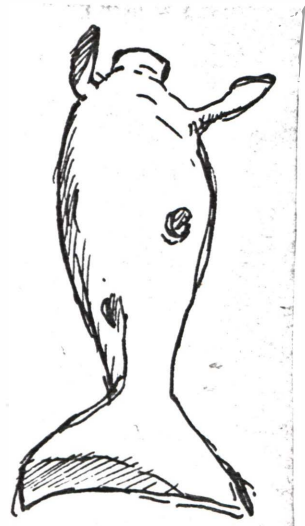
#### LEVIATHAN:

● Magamouth: The Times, 20.viii.,p.5a:"Rare Shark Found - Sydney (AP) - A shark dubbed 'megamouth' with lips that glow in the dark, has been washed ashore off the coast of western Australia and is only the third such specimen to be found, scientists said yesterday. The 13 ft fish came ashore near the resort town of Mandurag. Residents pushed it back to sea but it beached itself again and died." The Frankfurter Rundschau (22.viii,p.14) gives the name of the scientist as Gerald Allen. The Saudi Gazette (20.viii,p.5b) adds that the two previous megamouths were discovered in 1976 off Hawai and in 1984 off California.

● Pacific Ocean. "Sea Breeze", Sept 88,p.611, has an article by William Williamson: "...monster of the deep". He recounts a sighting he had around 1961, while on the "Varicella" in the Pacific. He saw a 30 - 40 ft serpent, scaly, red with black markings. He wrote to the Greenwich Maritime Museum, who could not identify it. He says he saw a similar creature later in TV in a programme about Pacific exploration. Sounds like a giant sea snake to me. o Bibliography: Myself, in Pursuit 80, 1987,p.185 on the giant turtles of the Gulf Stream. Fortean Times 50, p.22, on the irkuem. Fate (March 88,pp.62-69) has an article by John H Sanson on "Fabulous Lunkers", sea serpents off Nova Scotia. A recent book by Mr Gibson: Tales of an Orkney Island, mentions the 1808 Stronsa carcass, and claims it remains unidentified. I also have a 2pp leaflet, author Tom Bryan: The Scottish Sea Serpent, published by Drumrunie Press, Ullapool, 1987. It is a small and incompetent listing of some sightings mentioned by Heuvelmans, aimed at tourists.

● Red Sea: The Arab News (22.viii,p.2a, and the Saudi Gazette (22.viii,p.5de) have similar reports about a big, "rare female fish", netted off Thul, at the Thawal Red Sea coast, by 58-year old Hussein (or Husain) Ayed Sarhan Al-Jahdali. The 3.5m/12 ft fish had "a wild strange face" and a "hand which resembles that of a Dolphin's". The AN says: "a misshapen head, a fin similar to that of a dolphin, a tail and a thorny, black-colored face." The SG, again, says "it has two breasts, a fish tail and a thorny black cover on the face". Husain landed the fish after considerable effort and handed it over to the Maritime sciences faculty of the King Abdul Aziz University. He says he was lucky enough to have caught a "more or less" similar, 2m/7ft fish in the vicinity one year earlier, according to a report in Al-Madinah. The drawing on the right is based on the photo of the creature. It is simply a dugong.

● Big turtle: I have always thought that Barmy, the Welsh



sea monster, was only a leatherback turtle. Now, another leatherback was washed ashore at the Welsh coast, though my sources (SZ 28.ix,p.6obc & FAZ 28.ix,p.9a) do not mention where. According to Peter Morgans, Head of the Zoological Section of Cardiff Museum, and Mike Alexanders, Office for Environmental Protection, it is the biggest turtle ever found: 2.59m/8.5 ft in length and 907 kg in weight. This year there were many jellyfish at the Welsh coast, on which the turtle feeds. (Also in SWF 3, 27.ix 88)

#### KRAKEN:

- "Diver" magazine, Sept 88, says a 5m-span octopus was filmed by an American TV crew at the Pacific Coast. They say it's the biggest octopus ever filmed.

#### USO:

- 1) On July 2, the British nuclear sub "Conqueror" rammed the yacht "Dalriada" in the Irish Sea (NZZ, 21.vii,8a) 2) Daily Telegraph, 14.ix.,p.13e: "Fishing for subs. Sweden is testing a new submarine detector - a fishing line with a magnet that would stick to the hull.-Reuter." 3) The MUFON UFO Journal, Nr 227, 3/87,pp.6/7, has an article by R Hendrickson, on submarine lightwheels - his theory: submerged Ufos!
- Fort William: The Great Glen area of Scotland suffered a minor Ufo flap in August. My check in the IC revealed no sightings over Loch Ness. The Oban Times/OT, 25.viii,p.1h: Mr Peter Forbes, Mrs M McDonald and Susan McDonald, on Aug 21, at 23 hours, saw, over Ben Nevis "a light brighter than a star...It got less bright and it seemed to go up and then it disappeared." On Sept 1, p.1cd, the OT brought further reports: the light had been observed in the Oban/Ft William area on Aug 21 and 22. A Ft William woman saw it on Aug 22 at 1.30 am. it was a "white brilliant shining light, going very, very fast." Mrs Joyce Dagety, Oban, saw a "bright light, much bigger than a star. It went up slowly in the sky." She also saw it on Aug 24. Two men fishing in the River Lochy saw it on Aug 21, 1130pm. They had also seen it a couple of days before. One of them, Mr Ward, said: "We saw it travelling across the sky and we saw two travelling in another direction the other day." Most witnesses said that two shooting stars crossed the ufos path, astronomers identified it, correctly, I think, as Mars. On Sept 8,p.3efg, the OT brings in the usual joker: Mr Moore, from Australia, who plans to suspend fish farms from airships, says the ufo was his first trial. He declared "his first trials have already been seen by the public, following reports of UFO sightings in the Oban Times last week. He says it is a basic misconception that the flying objects came from Mars." Fish farms are hotly debated in Scotland, in Sept several papers printed stories about them polluting the lochs. One will also be installed at Dores in Loch Ness.

#### WHALES:

- A 21 ft female pilot whale stranded in the Beaulieu Firth between Groom and Kirkhill (IC, 16.viii,p.7a). Another whale, unidentified, but probably a pilot whale, was spotted by many in Loch Fyne. Last year, a turtle was washed ashore in the loch. (CT, 1.ix,p.1b) Another dead pilot whale was washed ashore in the Jadebusen, W Germany. It was 5.4m in length and weighted 1.5 tons. (Rhp, 6.ix 88) Three pilot whales in three weeks - I've noticed before that whale reports come in waves.

#### CRYPTOZOLOGY:

- Big Cats: BBC Wildlife, Nov 87,p.61o, has a photo of the Exmmor Beast (in colour) by Trevor Beer, who took it on Bank Holiday, Aug 87. It shows a black, 4 - 4.5 ft cat. The kills, the magazine adds, were made by feral dogs. What may be the first American ABC story appeared in the Clare Journal, 26.vii 1875. p.4d: the story of J K Markill's fight with a 7ft black panther at Norfolk, New York.
  - Yeti: Pravda, German edition, 19.viii,p.7, has a story about the search for the Dschestyrnak, the hominid of the Kekirimtau Mountains in the NW of the Tien Shan Mountains. The expedition concluded that the yeti is a myth.
  - According to BBC Wildlife, Nov 87,p.558/59: the pygmy elephant of Africa is a myth. ● Scottish Daily Record, 2.ix,p.17: Billy McLaren, angling in the river Devon, caught a fish. Experts still try to determine whether its a grayling or a humble dace.
- This ends Bilk 25/26, I had so many reports in one month that I typed it Sept 28! I hope this flap year becomes quieter, so that I'll be back in January with the normal two-page issue. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. --